

Acorn at Westcroft

4 Wimborne Crescent, Westcroft, MILTON KEYNES, MK4 4DE

Inspection date

Previous inspection date

05/11/2012

Not Applicable

The quality and standards of the early years provision

This inspection:

3

Previous inspection:

Not Applicable

How well the early years provision meets the needs of the range of children who attend 3

The contribution of the early years provision to the well-being of children 3

The effectiveness of the leadership and management of the early years provision 3

The quality and standards of the early years provision

This provision is satisfactory

- Children enjoy a range of activities that cover all areas of learning and most children make suitable progress because of this.
- Staff encourage children to make friends. They feel settled and secure because they play with staff and children that they know well.
- The management team have a clear vision for improvements that they want to make to the nursery. There is an appropriate development plan in place to secure future improvements to outcomes for children.

It is not yet good because

- The key person system is not consistently well developed to meet the needs of all children in the setting. Due to this outcomes are better for some children than others.
- Parents who learn English as an additional language are not always kept fully informed about their children's development due to the language barrier. These and some other parents are also not fully encouraged to share information about other professionals who may be involved in their children's care.

Information about this inspection

Inspections of registered early years provision are scheduled:

- at least once in every inspection cycle. The current cycle ends on 31 July 2016
- more frequently where Ofsted identifies a need to do so, for example where provision was previously judged as inadequate
- brought forward in the inspection cycle where Ofsted has received information that suggests the provision may not be meeting the legal requirements of the Early Years Foundation Stage; or where assessment of the provision identifies a need for early inspection
- prioritised for inspection where we have received information that the provision is not meeting the requirements of the Early Years Foundation Stage and which suggests children may not be safe
- at the completion of an investigation into failure to comply with the requirements of the Early Years Foundation Stage.

The provision is also registered on the compulsory part of the Childcare Register. This report includes a judgment about compliance with the requirements of that register.

Inspection activities

- The inspector observed staff and children interacting together.
- The inspector looked at documentation in the nursery including assessments of individual children's progress.
- The inspector spoke to parents about their views of the nursery.
- The inspector carried out a joint observation of staff practice with the manager.

Inspector

Naomi Brown

Full Report

Information about the setting

Acorn at Westcroft re-registered in 2012, Acorn Childcare manages the nursery. Prior to this re-registration Milton Keynes Council operated the Westcroft Nursery. Acorn Childcare is a not-for-profit organisation that operates nurseries and out-of-school provisions in Milton Keynes and Northamptonshire. This nursery is situated in the retail district of Westcroft, Milton Keynes, Buckinghamshire. The premises are comprised of three base rooms for children, a kitchen, toilet and washing facilities, an office and outdoor play space. This nursery is registered on the Early Years Register and the compulsory part of the Childcare Register. The nursery receives funding for two, three and four year olds.

There are currently 57 children on roll. The nursery opens weekdays from 8am to 6pm for 51 weeks of the year.

What the setting needs to do to improve further

To meet the requirements of the Early Years Foundation Stage the provider must:

- improve the key person system to help ensure that every child's care and education is tailored to meet their individual needs.

To further improve the quality of the early years provision the provider should:

- share and explain children's development and care with all parents, ensuring a two-way communication using interpreter support where necessary.

Inspection judgements

How well the early years provision meets the needs of the range of children who attend

Overall children make appropriate progress as expected for their age and taking into consideration their starting points when they joined the nursery. Children enjoy a range of activities that cater for their individual interests. Staff plan activities and organise toys and equipment because of things they have seen children doing, to encourage them to develop to the next stage of learning. Most children enjoy close relationships with their key persons which supports their confidence as learners. However, the quality of the key person system is not always consistent and because of this some children's individual learning needs are not fully identified.

All staff promote children's confidence. They make eye contact with children when they speak to them and most staff are enthusiastic when they play with children, individually and as a group. Children enjoy physical play, indoors and outdoors. They run and climb in the garden, using a range of large play equipment. They also enjoy using their hands to click small blocks together and learn to hold pens, pencils and use a computer mouse correctly. These are useful skills for children to have when they move to school. Children can choose when they want to play indoors or outdoors. Older children put their coats on with gentle support from staff. They say that they 'need a hat' because 'it is cold outside,' showing that they understand how to protect themselves from the cold weather. Babies enjoy mixing with older children as they share the garden. They enjoy exploring different toys and playing with older children to improve their social skills. This supports smoother transitions between rooms as babies and toddlers are familiar with the next age room and

the staff who will care for them when they go there.

Three and four-year-old children have opportunities to develop their writing skills. They are aware that they can write for a reason, for example, as they write a shopping list during role play. Older children can write their names with help and enjoy learning to form letters that they recognise. They have a specific writing and drawing area and free access to pens, pencils and crayons to help them to develop these skills. They enjoy describing things they have written, pointing out their names on the wall and taking pride in their work.

Parents have opportunities to be involved in their children's learning and development. They are invited to attend parent's forums and speak to key persons when they drop off or collect their children. However, information on their children's learning and development is not always available for them to see. Staff use communication books which cover some things that their children have done during the day. However, parents who speak English as an additional language are not always invited to share all relevant information about their children. This results in some children who learn English as an additional language not making as good progress as others.

The contribution of the early years provision to the well-being of children

Children are settled and secure in the nursery because staff are aware of their care and welfare needs. Staff speak to parents about children's likes and dislikes and understand their care needs. For example, they find out about any allergies the children may have. Staff members understand the procedures to follow when giving children medication and if children have an accident in the nursery. This helps them promote children's welfare. All rooms within the nursery are welcoming and safely set out in clear learning areas. Children can move around their rooms safely. All toys and play equipment are maintained by staff who check them daily. Children are able to play happily and securely because their toys and play areas are safe and suitable. Children are also able to successfully manage their own behaviour. They play cooperatively in groups and are becoming increasingly independent. Staff remind children how to manage their own behaviour, for example, not running indoors as they might slip.

Children develop their awareness of healthy lifestyles while they play in the fresh air. They enjoy eating freshly prepared food, which is a recent change made by the management team to promote healthy eating. They eat as a social group and are encouraged to use cutlery appropriately and learn to drink from open cups. Children can wash their hands at low level basins and staff encourage them to do so independently.

Regular outings to wooded areas encourage older children's confidence to manage their own boundaries while they explore the natural world. Children enjoy exploring forests and bring back objects that they have found, including conkers and leaves. They use these to complete paintings which are then displayed on the walls. Children enjoy pointing out their paintings with pride. These outings help older children to develop confidence and independence in situations away from the nursery. This helps them to prepare for the next

big step in their life, starting school.

The effectiveness of the leadership and management of the early years provision

The manager and nominated person use a clear procedure and policy to safeguard children in the nursery. Staff are all trained in child protection and are aware of the procedure to record and report any concerns they have. The nursery has recently been taken over by a new company and the manager has revised the policies and procedures because of this. She has also begun to use a planning system that meets the requirements of the Early Years Foundation Stage. This enables staff to plan for individual children, in all areas of learning. As a result, children develop in all areas and receive a well-balanced education. The manager monitors the assessments of children in individual rooms. She has identified some areas for improvement in the quality of children's assessments. She has begun to train staff to improve their understanding and recording of children's assessments by observing children together and encouraging staff to describe what they see.

The manager is developing a new appraisal system to identify the specific training or support needs for individual staff. The current system meets requirements but the management team have identified it as an area for improvement. The manager monitors teaching and care in the nursery. She spends time in each room and children are familiar with her and greet her warmly. However, some issues with the key person system, while identified, have not been resolved for the full benefit of all children.

The manager has written a clear self-evaluation form that includes a range of strengths and specific areas for improvement. The manager and the nominated person have used this information to write a clear development plan for future improvements. The manager is able to describe how she hopes that specific changes might improve outcomes for children. Any changes made are done so with children's individual needs in mind, therefore the nursery's capacity to improve is positive.

Staff have positive relationships with most parents. They use contact books and daily discussions to share information about children's routines and activities that they complete. Parents speak highly of the nursery and they praise staff members' commitment to meeting their children's care needs. However, these partnerships are less effective with some parents, including those who speak English as an additional language. In these cases staff have not found ways to support a two-way exchange of information about children's learning and development needs and achievements.

Relationships with other providers that children attend, who deliver the Early Years Foundation Stage, are developing which promotes continuity in children's care. The management team have solid links with local authority advisors and use these to develop staff practice.

The Childcare Register

The requirements for the compulsory part of the Childcare Register are **Met**

What inspection judgements mean

Registered early years provision

Grade	Judgement	Description
Grade 1	Outstanding	Outstanding provision is highly effective in meeting the needs of all children exceptionally well. This ensures that children are very well prepared for the next stage of their learning.
Grade 2	Good	Good provision is effective in delivering provision that meets the needs of all children well. This ensures children are ready for the next stage of their learning.
Grade 3	Satisfactory	Satisfactory provision is performing less well than expectations in one or more of the key areas. It requires improvement in order to be good.
Grade 4	Inadequate	Provision that is inadequate requires significant improvement and/or enforcement. The provision is failing to give children an acceptable standard of early years education and/or is not meeting the safeguarding and welfare requirements of the Early Years Foundation Stage. It will be inspected again within 12 months of the date of this inspection.
Met		The provision has no children on roll. The inspection judgement is that the provider continues to meet the requirements for registration.
Not Met		The provision has no children on roll. The inspection judgement is that the provider does not meet the requirements for registration.

Inspection

This inspection was carried out by Ofsted under Sections 49 and 50 of the Childcare Act 2006 on the quality and standards of provision that is registered on the Early Years Register. The registered person must ensure that this provision complies with the statutory framework for children's learning, development and care, known as the Early Years Foundation Stage.

Setting details

Unique reference number	EY447038
Local authority	Milton Keynes
Inspection number	795438
Type of provision	Full-time provision
Registration category	Childcare - Non-Domestic
Age range of children	0 - 8
Total number of places	64
Number of children on roll	57
Name of provider	Acorn Childcare 2
Date of previous inspection	Not applicable
Telephone number	01908 506 793

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Type of provision

For the purposes of this inspection the following definitions apply:

Full-time provision is that which operates for more than three hours. These are usually known as nurseries, nursery schools and pre-schools and must deliver the Early Years Foundation Stage. They are registered on the Early Years Register and pay the higher fee for registration.

Sessional provision operates for more than two hours but does not exceed three hours in any one day. These are usually known as pre-schools, kindergartens or nursery schools and must deliver the Early Years Foundation Stage. They are registered on the Early Years Register and pay the lower fee for registration.

Childminders care for one or more children where individual children attend for a period of more than two hours in any one day. They operate from domestic premises that are usually their own home. They are registered on the Early Years Register and must deliver the Early Years Foundation Stage.

Out of school provision may be sessional or full-time provision and is delivered before or after school and/or in the summer holidays. They are registered on the Early Years Register and must deliver the Early Years Foundation Stage. Where children receive their

Early Years Foundation Stage in school these providers do not have to deliver the learning and development requirements in full but should complement the experiences children receive in school.

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